



# Hon. Robert T. Matsui

## Member of Congress

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*Robert T. Matsui*

Serving California's 5th District

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## MATSUI HOLDS MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG TOWN HALL MEETING

SACRAMENTO, CA – Congressman Robert T. Matsui hosted a Town Hall meeting at the Sacramento Unified School District's office on April 7, where he discussed the new Medicare prescription drug provisions with over 100 Sacramento residents.

Matsui provided the crowd with a review of the changes in Medicare that were approved by Congress and the President in late 2003, and highlighted their impact on seniors. He also described seniors' options in purchasing Medicare discount drug cards that will be available in June. They will be effective until the new prescription drug benefits start in 2006.

In his presentation, Matsui relayed a number of concerns, primary of which include:

- **The Republican drug benefit is woefully inadequate.** Seniors will have to pay \$4,020 out of their own pocket for the first \$5,100 of their prescription drug costs – that's 80% of costs. There is also a significant gap in coverage where seniors will continue to pay monthly premiums, but receive no assistance towards the costs of their drugs.
- **The Republican drug bill does nothing to lower prices.** The bill explicitly prohibits the government from using the collective purchasing power of more than 40 million seniors to negotiate lower drug prices.
- **The Republican bill undermines Medicare.** Beginning in 2010, Medicare will be forced to compete with private companies for the provision of all Medicare and prescription drug benefits. This will fundamentally alter Medicare and undermine the program's promise of providing health care for all America's seniors.
- **The Republican drug bill provides unreliable discount cards.** Seniors need to carefully consider their choices when purchasing a drug discount card. Once the card is purchased, seniors are locked into that card for one year, while the companies selling the cards are allowed to switch the drugs that are on their discount list and the cost of these drugs every seven days.

To view more detailed information that Congressman Matsui provided at the Town Hall, please [click here](#).

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